



## **An Open Letter from Illinois Business Leaders on Marriage Equality**

Many factors go into creating a state's business environment. Perhaps most important is a state's ability to attract top talent from around the world. Since human capital drives innovation and growth, a state must foster an environment where people want to live.

To be competitive, a state must create an equitable, fair and respectful environment for all of its citizens. For this reason – among others — it is vitally important that Illinois lawmakers enact marriage equality soon.

Marriage equality would strengthen the workforces of Illinois employers, who know there is no substitute for employees with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Companies must understand a changing marketplace and be able to connect with their customers; having a diverse workforce is a part of that. That's one reason many employers have adopted non-discrimination policies and offer domestic partner benefits.

Marriage equality promotes economic development, too. According to the UCLA School of Law's Williams Institute, allowing same-sex couples to marry would generate between \$39 million and \$72 million in revenues for Illinois businesses, creating \$4.5 million to \$8 million in new sales and lodging tax revenues over three years.

The American people are increasingly supportive of marriage equality, with a majority believing same-sex couples should be allowed to marry. We agree with them. States with the metro areas of New York City, Seattle, Boston, and Baltimore have already legalized marriage equality. Here in the Midwest, Iowa has granted full marriage equality, while Minnesota is poised to do the same later this year. Illinois simply cannot afford to be less competitive than other states.

The Illinois legislature should act now. It's the right thing for Illinois.

Signed,

**Curt Bailey**, President, Related Midwest

**Andrew Bluhm**, Founder and Principal,  
Delaware Street Capital

**Neil G. Bluhm**, Founder and Managing Principal,  
Walton Street Capital

**Norm Bobins**, Former CEO, LaSalle Bank;  
Chairman, PrivateBank and Trust Co.

**Bill Brandt**, President and CEO, Development  
Specialists, Inc.

**Carole Brown**, Senior Managing Director,  
Barclays Capital

**Lewis B. Campbell**, Chairman and CEO, Navistar  
International

**Chicago Urban League**

**Lance Chody**, CEO, Garrett Popcorn Shops

**Philip B. Clement**, Global Chief Marketing and  
Communications Officer, Aon plc

**Hon. William M. Daley**

**Laura Desmond**, CEO, Starcom Mediavest Group

**Fred Eychaner**, Chairman, Newsweb  
Corporation

**Paul S. Fisher**, President and CEO, CenterPoint Properties

**Albert M. Friedman**, CEO and President, Friedman Properties, Ltd.

**Google Inc.**

**Peter Gottlieb**, President, North Star Investment Management Corporation

**Groupon**

**David A. Helfand**, CEO, Helix Funds

**Carrie Hightman**, Executive Vice President and Chief Legal Officer, NiSource Inc.

**Melody Hobson**, President, Ariel Investments, LLC

**Fred Hoch**, CEO, Illinois Technology Association

**Mark S. Hoplamazian**, President and CEO, Hyatt Hotels Corporation

**Kym Hubbard**, CIO and Treasurer, Ernst & Young

**Ron Huberman**, Executive Chair, TransitPro Logistics, Inc.

**Illinois Science & Technology Coalition**

**Knight Engineers & Architects**

**William Lawless**, President, The Gage & Henri Restaurants

**Joseph Mansueto**, Founder and CEO, Morningstar Inc.

**Matt Moog**, Founder and Chairman, Built In Chicago

**Maura O'Hara**, Executive Director, IVCA

**Orbitz Worldwide Inc.**

**Sarah Pang**, Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, CNA Financial Corp.

**Richard S. Price**, Chairman and CEO, Mesirow Financial

**Quintin E. Primo III**, Chairman and CEO, Capri Capital Partners, LLC

**J.B. Pritzker**, Co-Founder and Co-Lead, The Pritzker Group

**Gigi Pritzker Pucker**, OddLot Entertainment

**Doug Regan**, Midwest Regional Director, J.P. Morgan

**Judith C. Rice**, Senior Vice President, BMO Harris Bank

**Laura Ricketts**, Director, Chicago Cubs, Chairman of the Board, Chicago Cubs Charities

**Desiree Rogers**, CEO, Johnson Publishing Company

**John W. Rogers, Jr.**, Chairman and CEO, Ariel Investments, LLC

**John W. Rowe**, Chairman Emeritus, Exelon Corporation

**Michael Sacks**, CEO, Grosvenor Capital Management, L.P.

**Harrison I. Steans**, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Financial Investments Corp.

**Jay Stieber**, Executive Vice President and General Counsel, Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Inc.

**Rich Stoddart**, President, Leo Burnett North America

**Tribeca Flashpoint Media Arts Academy**

**Estelle Walgreen**, Founder, Hispanically Speaking News

**Tony Weisman**, Regional President, Digitas

\*Individuals listed as signatories represent themselves only.